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## THE ROBERT M. LINDSAY PRINT PUBLICATIONS.

Next to the delight of viewing a gallery of pictures is that of turning over a collection of prints.

The Florentine goldsmith, Tommaso Finiguerra, about the year 1440, left by accident an engraved plate which he had prepared with soot and oil for the reception of enamel, or *niello*, face downward on a sheet of paper—and a new art was born. An art which was the only means of multiplying the painter's creations, until in 1839, Daguerro announced his light prints. And although since that time the reproductive processes have multiplied and become perfected, still, nothing can take the place of the spontaneous skill of the graver's burin as he translates a painting into a print.

Engraving may truly be called translating, and the same honors may fairly be accorded to the engraver as to his literary prototype. The same intelligence and talent is demanded, whether translating a picture or a poem. Bryant's "Homer," Longfellow's "Dante," Dr. Coles's "*Dies Irae*," have the same comparative measure of merit as Friedrich Müller's translation of Raphael's "Sistine Madonna" or Morghen's "Last Supper," after Leonardo da Vinci's fresco.

The great engravers present with exquisite exactitude copies of the master paintings with all their attributes, excepting that of color. But the judicious taste of a master of the caligraphic art substitutes so rich and brilliant a chiaroscuro, or rather abstracts it from the original which he copies with so new and superior a perception that a fine impression from a plate, wrought with consummate skill, possesses that peculiar and intrinsic merit which renders it a new work and a valuable piece of art. The engraver, whether he works on the block, or on the copper plate in line, or etches and bites, is as recon-dite and abstractly meritorious as the painter whose feeling and intention he transfers. He possesses as much originality of invention if, as is often the case, he himself designs the composition.

Line engraving excels in beautiful precision and symmetry of form, etching in freedom and sketchiness. Edelinck, the prince of engravers, had all perfections in design, chiaroscuro, aerial perspective, local tints, softness, lightness, variety, in short, everything which can enter into the most exact representation of the true and beautiful without the aid of color. Rembrandt's etchings exhibit the same qualities as his paintings, the magic effect of light and shade, the sincerity and truthfulness of composition and the felicitous effect of apparently random lines—they all bear the stamp of the great master.

Enrolled among the famous artists are names like Cornelius Vischer, Bolswert, Vorstermans, Nanteuil, Masson, the Drevets, Desnoyers, Friedrich Müller, Raphael Morghen, Robert Strange, William Sharp, the German Mandel, Seymour Haden.

These reflections came to me when leafing over the portfolios which I found in Mr. Robert M. Lindsay's Gallery, on Walnut Street, in Philadelphia, and especially when examining his own publications. I single out a few that my readers of taste may perceive that these gems of art may become their property for equal enjoyment.

One of the most remarkably fine plates which I have ever seen is an original etching by William Hole, R.S.A., which is verily successful. The late P. G. Hamerton (editor of *The Portfolio*), perhaps the most competent authority of our day, speaks thus of Mr. Hole's etching:

"The technical quality of Mr. Hole's work is part of its vitality. It is completely without false pretension, and has none of the heaviness attendant upon mere industry. It is thoroughly sound and expressive work in a simple kind, and a just critic could find nothing to say against it. An unjust one might compare it with etching of greater technical resources, but that would be comparing it with another art."

The etching I refer to represents "A Canterbury Pilgrimage," and again I can do no better than quote Mr. Hamerton as he referred to this particular etching:

"Its principal merit is the clear discrimination of character without any tendency to caricature. Every one of the figures and faces is marked by strong individuality. They are all firmly drawn, and the female faces are not wanting in delicacy. The attitudes are cheerful and lively, like those of people setting forth on an agreeable expedition. The animals are rather heavy and deficient in charm, but they are felt to be secondary. Indeed, the horses are purposely made rather small size to give importance to the riders. The technical quality of this plate is simple and sound throughout."

Chaucer's lines describing the glad April Morning in Old England, 500 years ago, inspired the artist:

"Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth  
Inspired hath in every holte and heethe  
The tendre croppes, . . . . .  
And small fowles maken melodie,

Thanne longen folk to gon on pilgrimage."

The pilgrimage is not a religious one; it savors more of a holiday, when the company of nine-and-twenty starts out from the Tabard Inn. And here you see stout Harry Bailly, the host, and the knight and the monk, and the poet and the Reeve, and all the worthy company who will regale each other with their tales.

The grand gusto in which this plate is designed is intensely captivating.

But I must turn to another plate by this same etcher; this time after a notable painting, which was shown in this year's Royal Academy Exhibition, by Lucy Kemp Welch, the English Rosa Bonheur. It is entitled "Hauling Timber," and is a wonderfully fine example.

Then comes a portrait of Charles Darwin, etched by Mercier, after the painting from life by W. W. Ouless, R.A. This plate reminds one, in its technique, of Masson's famous "Grey-haired Man." There is another etching by John Henry Hill, of Durham Cathedral—surely a graphic description of a sweeping landscape with an architectural monument that has the breadth and fulness of a Constable. So is the work of Chas. O. Murray, as seen in a copy of the famous Gainsborough, "The Brook," an example of the highest merit in the grapher's art. As an example of portraiture in photo etching from life, commend me to the portrait of W. W. Keen, the noted professor of surgery. Here is a strong, yet genial, kindly face, a human document par excellence. All these are Mr. Lindsay's own publications.

There are many other prints to be described, but I can only scan them. I must hurry on, for it is train-time.

A most interesting collection of early American portraits will be sold at the Anderson Auction Rooms, 5 West 29th street, on April 26th. There are some verily occurring paintings of high merit among the numbers, and I would mention the description of a few. There is a great historical portrait of Washington, formerly owned by Louis XVI., and given by him to Lafayette; also a portrait of Washington by Gilbert Stuart and presented by Washington to General Ellicott, one of the founders of Washington City. A portrait of Jackson by Charles Wilson Peale was considered by Peale as one of the best he ever painted, as mentioned in a letter kept in the archives of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, in which letter Peale complained that Jackson, who was preparing to go to the Mexican war, had kept him waiting an unreasonable time before giving him a sitting. There is here a Trumbull Washington, full length, from the estate of General Golt, of Virginia; a replica by Naegle of his Henry Clay portrait, which hangs in the Clay Club of Philadelphia, and other numbers.